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November 24, 1999 NARESH CHATURVEDI
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28. MIGRATION OF THE COMMANDER BUTTERFLY
LIMENTIS PROCRIS (CRAMER)

In the forenoon of November 5, 1999, the first author (NC) observed a Commander Butterfly feeding on flowers of *Ixora* outside Hornbill House. I waited for some time to see whether the butterfly was in the vicinity and would return to feed on these flowers. However, there was no trace of the butterfly till evening. Subsequently, in the third week of November, I saw two of these butterflies feeding on *Lantana* flowers near Churchgate Station, Mumbai.

On November 25, 1999, one of us (VG) collected a caterpillar of the butterfly from a kadamb tree *Anthocephalus cadamba* growing within the boundary of Hornbill House. The caterpillar pupated on November 25, 1999 and the butterfly emerged on December 3, 1999. On a closer look at the kadamb tree, we found three more caterpillars, which were 3rd instars and pupated on December 12, 1999.

Earlier, a BNHS member, Mr. Kiran Srivastava informed us about the sighting of a Commander butterfly near Colaba Woods on December 28, 1998. According to him, the

butterfly seemed to have escaped from a predator, as the right hindwing was completely missing.

I have been monitoring butterfly migration in Mumbai and its vicinity over the last 10 years and have not come across the Commander butterfly in the city area. According to Wynter-Blyth (1957), this butterfly is a denizen of, though not exclusively confined to, thickly forested areas receiving heavy or moderate rain at an elevation of 305 to 1,220 m

It is interesting to note their presence in an urban built up area with heavy vehicular traffic. As these butterflies are seen only for a short time, they were possibly on migration. Though many Nymphalids are known to migrate, Williams (1930) does not mention this butterfly.

December 17, 1999 NARESH CHATURVEDI
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